

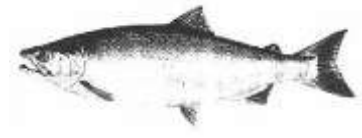
ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES



NEWS RELEASE

Cora J. Campbell, Commissioner
Jeff R. Regnart, Director



Contact:

Jeremy Botz, Gillnet Area Management Biologist
Tommy Sheridan, Seine Area Management Biologist
Amanda Wiese, Asst. Area Management Biologist
Phone: (907) 424-3212 Fax: (907) 424-3235

Prince William Sound Area Office
401 Railroad Avenue, PO Box 669
Cordova, AK 99574-0669
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Prince William Sound Salmon Fishery News Release #43

COPPER RIVER DISTRICT: The Copper River District will open at 7:00 am on Monday, July 22 for a 36-hour commercial fishing period. Waters within the Chinook salmon inside closure area will be OPEN during this commercial fishing period. The cumulative sonar count through July 19 was 1.22 million fish whereas the anticipated inriver passage range for this date is 655,189–1,006,183 fish. For the week ending July 20, the actual Copper River Delta survey index count was 59,200 versus an anticipated range of 31,424–75,775 sockeye salmon. The hatchery contributions from the period that closed on July 12 were 42% Gulkana Hatchery. The preliminary harvest estimate for the fishing period that closed Friday, July 19 was 10,500 sockeye salmon with 89 deliveries reported. The cumulative Copper River District commercial harvest to date is 8,600 Chinook salmon and 1.58 million sockeye salmon.

The Copper River District is open to subsistence fishing concurrent with commercial fishing periods until closed at the end of the season. Subsistence permits may be obtained during regular business hours. The Cordova ADF&G office is open to the public Monday - Friday, 8:00 am - 12:00 pm and 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm. **Subsistence permits are not available outside of regular office hours.**

BERING RIVER DISTRICT: The Bering River District will open at 7:00 am on Monday, July 22 for a 36-hour commercial fishing period. For the week ending July 20, the actual Bering River District survey index count was 22,150 versus a minimum anticipated range of 11,004–24,208 sockeye salmon. No harvest was reported for the commercial fishing period that closed Friday, July 19.

MONTAGUE DISTRICT: The Port Chalmers Subdistrict will open to commercial drift gillnet fishing for a 60-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Monday, July 22 with an additional 84-hour period anticipated to begin at 8:00 am on Thursday, July 25. Regulatory closed waters and anadromous stream closures within the Port Chalmers Subdistrict will not be in effect until further notice. Harvest from the period that closed Wednesday, July 17 was 3,230 chum salmon with 35 deliveries reported. The cumulative Port Chalmers Subdistrict commercial harvest to date is 464,000 chum salmon.

ESHAMY DISTRICT: The Main Bay Subdistrict, **excluding the MBH SHA and AGZ**, will open to commercial gillnet fishing for a 24-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Monday, July 22. Harvest from the period that closed Friday, July 19 was 103 chum, 958 pink and 1,560 sockeye salmon with 26 deliveries reported. Cumulative harvest through this date was 212,000 chum, 49,800 pink and 474,000 sockeye salmon.

SEINE FISHERIES: **VFDA reports insufficient broodstock collection progress at SGH.** Time and area for future commercial fishing periods in Port Valdez and Valdez Arm will be based on consideration for VFDA broodstock collection progress and wild stock escapement indices.

The pink salmon harvest estimate for the commercial purse seine fishing period on July 17 includes 1.6 million fish harvested in the Eastern District, 365,000 fish harvested in the Northern District, and 90,000 fish harvested in the Southeastern District. Final harvest numbers for the July 19 fishery in Prince William Sound are unavailable at the time of this announcement; however, it is estimated that at least 1.3 million pink salmon were harvested in the Eastern, Northern, and Southeastern districts combined. Aerial surveys of Prince William Sound indicate that pink salmon escapement indices are tracking ahead of anticipated numbers. **It is expected that there will be a regular schedule of broad area commercial purse seine fishing periods taking place on Monday, July 22, Thursday, July 25, and Sunday, July 28 in much of Prince William Sound.**

PWSAC anticipates beginning its pink salmon cost recovery program during the week of July 22. Future CPF openings targeting PWSAC enhanced pink salmon in hatchery subdistricts will be based on cost recovery fishing progress and run

entry. The R/V Solstice will be on station in the Southwestern District beginning July 22, gauging pink salmon run entry and stock composition. ADF&G staff will attempt to sample commercial catch on the fishing grounds during the July 22 commercial fishing period in the Southwestern District, and would appreciate any assistance that fishery participants can provide upon request.

COGHILL DISTRICT: Waters of the WNH THA and SHA up to a line of buoys in front of the barrier net were opened to commercial DRIFT GILLNET AND PURSE SEINE fishing for an 84-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Thursday, July 18. This fishing period remains in effect as previously announced. **The Coghill District, excluding the Bettles Bay Subdistrict and excluding the Esther Subdistrict, will open to commercial DRIFT GILLNET AND PURSE SEINE fishing for a 36-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Sunday, July 21 and ending at 8:00 pm on Monday, July 22. The WNH THA and SHA will close to all commercial fishing at 8 pm on Sunday July 21.** This extended period in portions of the Coghill District is intended to target what appears to be a large pink salmon return to Coghill River.

EASTERN DISTRICT: Waters of the Eastern District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for a 14-hour period beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Monday, July 22. **All waters of Port Valdez north of a line from Potato Point to Entrance Point will be closed to commercial fishing during this period.**

Waters inside of the following Eastern District Salmon Harvest Task Force (SHTF) markers are closed to commercial fishing during this period:

- (1) Galena Bay: east of a line from 60°56.87' N. lat., 146°39.87' W. long. to 60°56.55' N. lat., 146°39.65' W. long.;
- (2) Jack Bay: south and east of a line from 61°02.34' N. lat., 146°35.27' W. long. to 61°02.17' N. lat., 146°39.77' W. long.;
- (3) Sawmill Bay: north of a line from 61°02.71' N. lat., 146°46.44' W. long. to 61°02.58' N. lat., 146°47.07' W. long.

MONTAGUE DISTRICT: Waters of the Montague District, **excluding the Port Chalmers Subdistrict**, will open to commercial purse seine fishing for a 14-hour period beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Monday, July 22.

NORTHERN DISTRICT: Waters of the Northern District, **excluding the Perry Island Subdistrict, and excluding the CCH THA and SHA**, will open to commercial purse seine fishing for a 14-hour period beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Monday, July 22.

Waters inside of the following Northern District Salmon Harvest Task Force (SHTF) markers are also closed to commercial fishing during this period:

- (1) Siwash Bay: west of a line from 60°58.26' N. lat., 147°37.32' W. long. to 60°56.96' N. lat., 147°36.02' W. long.;
- (2) Jonah Bay: west of a line from 61°01.17' N. lat., 147°35.07' W. long. to 61°00.40' N. lat., 147°35.93' W. long.;

NORTHWESTERN DISTRICT: Waters of the Northwestern District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for a 14-hour period beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Monday, July 22.

SOUTHEASTERN DISTRICT: Waters of the Southeastern District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for a 14-hour period beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Monday, July 22.

SOUTHWESTERN DISTRICT: Waters of the Southwestern District south of 60°02.76' N. lat., **excluding the Port San Juan Subdistrict, and excluding the AFK Hatchery THA and SHA**, will open to commercial purse seine fishing for a 14-hour period beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Monday, July 22. Waters east of Point Helen (on Knight Island) will also open to commercial purse seine fishing for this period. This fishing period supersedes the previously announced July 22 Marsha Bay fishing period detailed in Prince William Sound Salmon Fishery News Release #41. All future Marsha Bay fisheries will run concurrently with general Southwestern District fishing periods.

The next scheduled salmon fisheries announcement is anticipated to occur by 2:00 pm Wednesday, July 24.

Permit holders are advised that unscheduled announcements based on current escapement data may occur at any time inseason either establishing an additional period or extending an open period.

Announcement recordings are available for **gillnet fisheries at 907-424-7535 and seine fisheries at 907-424-7345. In addition, announcement recordings are available in Anchorage at 267-2843.**

Additionally, announcements, inseason harvest data, and escapement data are available at the following web addresses:
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.main> (Copper River homepage) or
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareapws.main> (Prince William Sound homepage).

Unless otherwise specified, all openings are clock openings based on Alaska Daylight Time, which is based on Coordinated Universal Time and may be obtained by calling 303-499-7111.

The department encourages commercial permit holders to renew their licenses early and to check their CFEC vessel registration stickers to make sure that they are current.

The department also encourages permit holders to report observed violations to Wildlife Safeguard at 800-478-3377. Reports are anonymous and cash rewards may be paid for successful prosecution of violations.

PWS commercial fishers are reminded that area fisheries often necessitate fishing in close proximity to marine mammals. Under the Marine Mammals Protection Act (MMPA), the PWS drift gillnet fishery is classified as a Category II fishery. Participants in Category I and II fisheries must be registered in the Marine Mammal Avoidance Program (MMAP) to be authorized for lawful incidental, but not intentional, marine mammal takes during fishing. However, this authorization explicitly does **not** exempt holders of commercial fishing permits from the MMPA prohibition on takes of marine mammals listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act. As a participant in the PWS drift gillnet fishery you are automatically registered in the Marine Mammal Authorization Program (MMAP) by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). As a participant in a Category II fishery, you must:

- Maintain an MMAP Authorization Certificate, or a photocopy, on board the vessel while engaging in any of the fisheries identified on the reverse side of the certificate. For non-vessel or set net fisheries, the enclosed Certificate, or a photocopy, must be in the possession of the permit holder during fishing operations. This Certificate, in combination with a current, valid state or Federal fishing permit, will serve as your authorization to incidentally take non-endangered or non-threatened marine mammals in the course of commercial fishing operations.
- Report all injuries and mortalities of marine mammals within 48 hours of returning from the trip during which these takes occurred using the MMAP Mortality/Injury Reporting Form (visit http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/interactions/mmap_reporting_form.pdf for a copy).
- If so requested, take an observer aboard your vessel.

Purse seine and set gillnet gear are classified as a category III fisheries under the MMPA. Category III fishery participants are automatically exempted from the incidental take prohibition in the MMPA. Therefore, you do not need to maintain the MMAP certificate aboard your vessel, but must report any incidental takes of marine mammals within 48 hours of the incident or your return to port. Such reports must be made on the Marine Mammals Authorization Program Mortality/Injury Reporting Form.

Because some marine mammals are also listed under the Endangered Species Act, incidental takes are also regulated under that act and are not authorized. **All** MMPA category fisheries are liable for incidentally taking ESA listed species.

Please reference http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/esa_factsheet.pdf for a list of marine mammals currently listed under the ESA (you should periodically check with the National Marine Fisheries Service for any changes in listed species). Under the ESA, take means to “harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct.” 16U.S.C. 1532(19); and harass means an “intentional or negligent act or omission which creates the likelihood of injury to the wildlife by annoying it to such an extent as to significantly disrupt normal behavioral patterns which include, but are not limited to, breeding, feeding, or sheltering.” (50 C.F.R. 17.3).

To reduce the possibility of incidentally taking an ESA listed species and its associated liability ADF&G recommends that:

- Fishermen participating in area fisheries remain vigilant in monitoring gear when marine mammals may be present.
- Fishermen use avoidance measures (e.g., not fishing or relocating fishing activities when marine mammals are present or likely to be present) to minimize interactions with marine mammals.
- Avoid fishing in areas where marine mammals are likely to be present at night or when visibility or weather conditions make it difficult to spot marine mammals.

For further questions concerning marine mammal regulations call NMFS at 907-271-5006.